

Lincoln, Nebraska
August 19, 2005

**COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

The Community Corrections Council (Council) met Friday, August 19, 2005, 9:00 a.m., at the Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska. The meeting was open to the public and was preceded by advance publicized notice in the Lincoln Journal Star.

Members present:

Dr. Scot L. Adams
Mike Behm
William Burgess
Dr. Aileen Gruendel
Julie Hippen
Robert Houston
The Honorable John P. Icenogle
Joe Kelly
Robert Lindemeier
Jim McKenzie
Janice Walker
Dave Wegner
Senator Kermit A. Brashear, Chair

Member absent:

Esther Casmer
Catherine Cook
The Honorable Karen B. Flowers
Senator John Syowiecki

Council staff present:

Linda Krutz, Chief
Julie Okray
Julie L. Rogers

Others present:

Bruce Ayers
Jeff Beaty
Robert Bell
Joanne Harrell
Nancy Hicks
Steve King
John Krejci
Mark Langer
Rochelle Mallett
Doug Nichols
Michael Overton
Jim Pieper
T. Hank Robinson
Frank Velinsky

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME & OVERVIEW

Chairperson Brashear called the Council meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and gave an overview of the meeting. Attendance is indicated above.

Chairperson Brashear welcomed new member Mike Behm, Executive Director of the Crime Commission, and recognized that Nancy Montanez, Director of Health and Human Services will also be a new member pursuant to Legislative Bill 538. Introductions were made and the purpose of the Council was discussed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 13, 2005, meeting stood approved as presented.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FEE REPORT

The Community Corrections Fee Report was reviewed by Bruce Ayers of the Crime Commission. It was noted that there is interest accruing in each account. Such will be reflected in the next Fee Report.

This was the last Fee Report produced by Howard Kensinger of the Legislative Fiscal office as he has taken a position with the Nebraska Supreme Court as their Budget Officer.

TARGET POPULATION REPORT

The standard Target Population Report was highlighted by Mike Overton of the Crime Commission.

Overton mentioned that relative to the Uniform Data Analysis Fund, much is occurring including the filling the newly created position and Nebraska Probation Management Information System upgrades.

TIMELINE

The Timeline was approved as presented. The next Timeline will begin to track 2006.

JUSTICE SUBSTANCE ABUSE TEAM

The minutes of the June Justice Substance Abuse Team (JSAT) meeting were reviewed and discussed. Council member Aileen Gruendel voiced concerns regarding the direction of JSAT. She will bring her concerns to JSAT to get them resolved.

2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

Chairperson Brashear gave an overview of the Council's successes during the 2005 Legislative Session which included the passage of Legislative Bill 538 and the appropriation of \$2.5 million for a felony offender voucher treatment program. Funding for new Probation positions, in coordination with the new Specialized Substance Abuse Program (SSAS), was also added to Probation's budget. Senator Synowiecki, in his absence, was recognized as a notable advocate of the Council and contributed extensively to the Council's successes in the Legislature. Appropriations Chair, Senator Don Pederson, and Governor Heineman were also recognized as significantly contributing to this effort.

PENDING PROPOSALS

Jim McKenzie, Parole Administrator, amended his standing SSAS proposal. He requested to set aside a dollar amount designated for purchasing community services for

parolees in crisis situations needing mental health, or psychotropic, medications and services for stability in the short term until other community services can be secured.

Council member Bill Burgess *made a motion to enable Parole to set aside \$5000 for parolees in crisis situations temporarily needing psychotropic medications or mental health services until a stable source of medication and services is found.* The motion was seconded by Aileen Gruendel and approved.

Dave Wegner, acting Probation Co-Administrator, gave an overview of the progress of the SSAS program which is being funded by \$1.5 million of probation fees. Probation worked in partnership with the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature to provide funding for the personnel for SSAS. The initial pilot sites for SSAS include the counties of Dakota, Madison, Dawson, Hall, Douglas, Sarpy, Cass/Otoe, and Lancaster.

FEE FOR SERVICE VOUCHER TREATMENT PROGRAM

Dave Wegner, Acting Probation Co-Administrator, and Linda Krutz, Council Executive Director, explained the process staff has adopted to create the Fee for Service Voucher Treatment Program. A committee has been formed to flush out the policies and procedures for the program. The committee includes Council staff, Probation, Parole, HHS – Office of Behavioral Health, and Drug Courts. It was suggested that a private provider be on the committee, and Council member Julie Hippen volunteered and will be included.

PROBATION & PAROLE STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Linda Krutz, Council Executive Director, reviewed the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) memo regarding the outcomes of the Probation & Parole Strategic Planning Meeting. It was the first time in Nebraska's criminal justice history that Probation and Parole sat and planned together at the same meeting. Actions identified included articulating an overall mission, develop strategies to advance the mission, and support action plans. It was noted that Probation and Parole are in a time of systemic transition, things are changing and need to change.

Vera pointed out that there were four central areas of consensus that surfaced during the meeting: 1) collaboration needs to occur to utilize the most effective and efficient method of supervision of offenders in the community, 2) community corrections should be defined as it specifically relates to Nebraska, 3) offenders' risks and needs should be appropriately assessed, and 4) data sharing strategies shall be developed. Further, two areas were identified to focus long term efforts. Those include the development of regional day reporting centers and the creation of a continuum of integrated treatment resources. The Council was recognized as the catalyst for these efforts.

The Council recessed at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened at 10:45 a.m.

METHAMPHETAMINE TREATMENT STUDY PROGRESS

The contract to complete the Methamphetamine Treatment Study was awarded to the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). T. Hank Robinson, Ph.D., UNO, the principal of the study, presented an overview of the treatment study work plan including the technical approach, project requirements, and specific timeline.

The study strategy outlined by Dr. Robinson includes harnessing specialized skills and contact of several researchers and apply them to many different tasks; going straight to public health administrators, treatment providers and justice officials who will have to implement a new treatment model; and receiving the “next best thing” when delays loom.

It was brought to the attention of the Council that the University of Nebraska Medical Center has requested a 2006 earmark from the United States Congress, Byrne criminal justice discretionary methamphetamine treatment funding for two family court sites—one in Omaha and one in rural Nebraska.

SENTENCING GUIDELINES DISCUSSION

The proposed sentencing guidelines for drug offenses were discussed in light of the enhanced penalties for felony methamphetamine offenders under Legislative Bill 117. The Council will have to consider all factors in determining recommendations for the best approach in evaluating how to proceed in finding ways to steer drug offenders into alternatives to incarceration.

2006 COUNCIL LEGISLATION

Senator Brashear explained the Governor’s office timeline and deadline for legislative proposals in order to be included in the Governor’s proposed budget for the 2006 Legislative Session. The Council will formulate its legislative package to include issues such as revisiting mandatory minimums, cross training of treatment providers and probation/parole officers dealing with the same offender populations, recommendations arising from the Methamphetamine Treatment Study, and adding Council membership. Merging Probation and Parole administrations was also identified as needed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS & ADJOURNMENT

Steve King and Bob Houston of the Department of Correctional Services announced that they will be releasing their long range strategic plan and an overview of their community corrections facilities as they relate to the strategic plan will be presented at the next Council meeting.

Jim McKenzie asked for feedback about policies and procedures relating to the development of an electronic monitoring program for sex offenders on parole.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next scheduled meeting of the Council is Friday, September 16, 2005, 9:00 a.m., in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie L. Rogers